

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-7 and 9-10 will be all the claims pending in the application. Claim 9 was amended to be placed in independent form by incorporating claim 8, which has been canceled.

The Examiner indicated that claims 1-7 are allowed and that claims 9-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form in the Office Action dated March 4, 2004. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that with the entry of the proposed amendments, the present application will be in condition for allowance.

Therefore, entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

At page 2 of the Office Action, claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Welsh, in view of Vignaud, optionally considered with Magara or Saito, and further in view of Koike.

Without admitting that the rejection is correct, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested in view of the cancellation of claim 8.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103 rejection is respectfully requested, and allowance of claims 1-7 and 9-10 is respectfully requested.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Application No. 09/462,631

Attorney Docket Q57317

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Keiko K. Takagi
Registration No. 47,121

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

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